I think I laid claim to self-conceit; and, in so doing, I am afraid I may possibly have fibbed. The great value of it (*a certain kind of it*, of course,) I am most serious in asserting: and I often wish I could myself command a greater share. For instance, I feel fear now. For I have in a manner committed myself to a task for a strong man—to pull down fortified opinions: and the fortresses, when I look at them more closely, are defended by *men*—real men of flesh and blood. I fear, therefore, lest I should be led into war; not that I am afraid of a cracked crown for myself; but because I dread being obliged, or being *supposed*, to crack the crowns of others. Willingly will I assail doctrines; but "Strike my dog strike myself" say the teachers and supporters of these. And how am I (now when I think of it)—how am I to assail doctrines without assailing *doctors*? When I wish to say such and such an opinion is absurd, how can I word it so as to avoid calling such and such a man an ass who chooses to identify himself with it? Might Luther hope to pull down the old Papacy and ruffle never a hair of Leo's mane? Duty and sympathy clash within me. But one word of yours, Sir, (and I thank you for it,) goes far to give me confidence. There was I (in my last) vehemently denouncing, (as I fancied,) and in no measured terms, "boldly and honestly," certain gross abuses, and my song of war is received as the warbling of a "*good-humoured* correspondent!" Surely I do not know myself. By the bye, (just by way of an anecdote, you know) once on a time before this in my life I remember launching forth heavy words in a long strong strain of declamation which I meant to be interpreted as something most heroic and intrepid; and, (I shall never forget it,) when I expected to be put to the sword for rodomontade, a serene newspaper coolly approved of my "modest remarks:" "Myself is to myself unknown;" that's certain: *my* thunder is construed a joke, *my* lightning the flicker of a farthing dip. Men look at me through the wrong end of the glass, Mr. Editor. But since it is so, be it so. If thus there is so little poison in my ink, I am all the less in fear of giving wounds by these the spirtings of my pen; wherefore—Turn up thy cuffs, O my courage! and go *bang* at the enemy!

Well, Sir, there are "Protectionists" in architectural doctrine as well as in commercial: only that in this respect Commerce happens to be some years ahead of Architecture. Your most obedient is a sort of architectural Cobden; Young Architecture a "League;" the Institute, a House of Lords (with somebody by way of a "Duke" in it I hope); and you, Mr. Editor, a kind of Sir Robert (if you will) whom we hope to find taking up the matter of "Repeal," and therein, with the aid of the aforesaid Duke, triumphing to the utter discomfiture of the foe, and the firm establishment of a new *regime* with more enlightened opinions and more salutary standards. (Hear, hear.) More than this,—we are quite prepared to find you taking all the credit to yourself at the end; and to allow you all the glory of a renovator of the public mind, and a conqueror of public prejudice and error.

Before proceeding to direct assault upon the fortifications, suppose, as a preparatory step, we do a little in the way of undermining, whereby a certain portion of certain outworks of self-conceit may perchance tumble down. There lies at the root of the matter a branch of a certain vexed question, whose ramifications so spread abroad across the world that scarce a single man exists, perhaps, who is not in some way reached and troubled by it,—*That which I count* ALL, *another man counts* NOTHING. This, with regard to our present subject, is important enough to demand a serious paragraph. To every mind of man there is peculiarly some object of high value the estimate of which by others is matter of much wonderment to him — chagrin — perhaps provocation — perhaps disgust. Men see not alike: and somehow this gives them pain; they cannot help quarrelling about it. They think each other wonderfully stupid—lamentably lacking in the higher parts of Manhood—strangely perverted in the capital machinery. The old persuaders thought the Earth had reached its dotage when men began to wear that frightful thing the natural human head! The anatomist is wonderstruck this day, to think how other men could live in deadness to the exquisite beauties of *os this* and *os that* and *os t'other*. The scholar marvels that men could breathe at all in ignorance (whatever that may be assumed to be): and the unenlightened are equally at a loss to conceive what pleasure there can be in poring over dusty tomes. Some thousands have their highest joy in butchering birds in Autumn, or find such raptures in "the gentle art" of murdering fish, they wonder how it possibly can be that other men resist the strong temptation of so excellent a thing. While some poor ignorant misguided beings marvel how *Men* could have such murderous souls. So different are we,—so strangely manifold Earth's elements! Many a one, Sir, would rather be a fractional Stultz than a giant Buonaparte: many would prefer a Grimaldi to a Howard or a Wilberforce! Hundreds have the noblest thing of Earth in Geology—Botany—even Conchology;—thousands in Cookery;—multitudes in fox-hunting or The Turf;—myriads in War and Conquest;—and myriads more in spangled Rank and jingling Title. Among the rest, some hug Philosophy; some Science; some Art: and of the votaries of Art some choose the idol Architecture.

From this, now, Sir, we may easily step to two important points with regard to our subject, Architecture; 1st, its intrinsic value in the *real* world; and 2nd, the way in which it becomes to some the All of an *ideal* world.

But—query—what *is* Architecture?

Architecture is—the science of foundations, and concrete, and drains, and stone, and brick, and mortar, and strength of timber, and all that sort of thing,—knowing all about *houses*—you know. Not at all, friend Pickaxe-and-shovel; that's not Architecture—that's *Building*.

Architecture is, then,—drawing plans of Churches, and Railway-stations, and perhaps Bridges, and—all kinds of houses; isn't it?—No.

But *Archi-tecture — Architectura — τεχο-τεκτω*.—No matter: I am at Philosophy—not Philology; I speak of the *Thing*—not the *Word*.

Architecture is—the five orders, then. Nay, my dear Grandmother; that's not Architecture,—that's *Fiddlededee*. The *three* orders, then?—No; that's *Fiddlededum*.

Architecture is, then, the—Camden Society sort of thing;—pots for holy water, altars, pixes, piscinæ, stained glass, old manuscripts, bishops, rubbings of brasses, images scarcely decent, pictures horribly worse, madonnas, crosses, queer illegible kinds of printing, freemasonry, curious locks and hinges, and—all sorts of funny old things; isn't it?—O dear no; that's not Architecture; that's *Archæology, mon cher*—the Science of Rubbish.

Architecture is—the Greek style, then, and the Roman, and the Italian, and Gothic, and all that sort of thing; Norman, Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular; Elizabethan, Castellated, Cottage style, Swiss, Sir John Soane's style, and so forth: Architecture is *that* then.—No it isn't.—Then what *can it be?*

It is one of The Fine Arts.—And what then?

Well, let us explain it thus. Music, for instance, is another of The Fine Arts. The Fine Arts are *The Arts of The Beautiful*. Now what is Music? Music is The Art of The Beautiful in sounds. And, similarly, then, *Architecture is* THE ART OF THE BEAUTIFUL *in buildings*.

Ha ha ha! shouts the old gentleman; and his merriment is very great.—But, O parent of my parent! I reply, have I yet told thee in *thy* language what Architecture is? Do old madams like thee know what *Art* means? What *The Beautiful* is? These words are not in thy Dictionary. The world, believe me, hath grown *older* since the days of thy reverend chickenhood. Men—*Men*—have increased upon the Earth since thou wast a maiden.

Some, then, choose for their chief good, their excellent thing of Earth, Architecture. And be it so: many go farther and fare worse.

Now, Sir, much of the evil of the self conceit of your young and rising is to be found in the evil or erroneous judgment with which they have made this choice,—the wrong sense in which they return to the question, What is the chief end of man? the answer, *Architecture*. I was once young—very young—and (although I didn't think it) very simple. In those days I answered this question thus, and *erroneously* thus; (for it is possible to answer it *truly* thus.) And I remember well how I thereupon built up a false notion of myself and others—a misconception of the World; a dangerous thing for *any man*, and *ergo* a dangerous thing for an Architect. *The misconception of the World*, Sir, in the variety of its phases, is the true and philosophical root—the manifold "root of *all evil*." The machinery of Earth is such that he who misjudges it *must* be at fault; he who trusts himself into its enginery with a false idea of its structure *must* get a knock on the head; thousands are torn limb from limb thereby. It needs no *clairvoyance* to tell that the plentiful conceit of your juveniles has this false notion in it as an important ingredient. And we need not marvel at this. Neither need they be discouraged. There are *older* juveniles of the same stamp.

But think you that I speak in paradox when I say, that many a one from the beardless to the hoary at this moment believes that Architecture is the greatest purpose for human life? and that some are right in so believing, and some wrong? Look into the prefaces of professional books; listen to certain lectures and speeches; shrewdly scan the sentiments of correspondents in your own and kindred journals, especially the matter of their grievances; look into the heart of many a youth, as he lays it bare in his enthusiasm, or, more cautious, betrays it in a look—a word—a joy—a sorrow. It is no paradox, but a calm clear truth —*a fact*, however much some may disguise it; a fact of mighty value both for good and for evil.

Both good and evil, I have said. For there are two senses in the answer given,—two kinds of men that give it;—a right,—a wrong. One wraps himself for ever and completely in his Art, all things else lesser garments; he lives in an ideal World, and *there* his Art is All, supreme: the other sits him down upon *this* World, to breathe *its* air; and thinks (O falsely!) that his Art is *here* supreme. One has the mighty fact mighty for *good;* it is his vigour,—his heart-blood,—the *Love* that is the Soul of *Life;* his whole long history is a swift strange beauteous day-dream in the air —his angel home far out of Earth—his magic life a Rainbow in the sky—his death its merely vanishing! And such men (it is a purpose in the being of Earth) *such men there are*. The other has the mighty fact mighty for *evil*. *Half*-elevated, tied to the surface,—too high for Earth, too low for Sky,—with none or little of the joys of That Above, and all the cankering pains of This Beneath; a man half Art half Self,—half Angel half Man;—too matter-of-fact for life *there*, not enough for life *here;*—he, not, like the other, giving Art a true value in an ideal world, gives it a false value in the real world; and opens up his soul therefore to a factitious misery,—clothes himself in—often—Oh! a pitiable susceptibility to a keen false pain.

But I must take a week to think over this matter. To excogitate the *system* of so cloudy a thing we must throw alum into the Thought-butt to see the bottom. Meantime, Sir, if you will just say to your compositor, "O most excellent Compositor! this man is angry, and commandeth, saying, Alter no more of my sentences," I shall be, Sir, your obedient,

London. R.

The temporary church erected on the estate of the Marquis Camden, in Cantelow's-road, Camden-villas, near the spot on which it is intended to build a permanent church as soon as funds can be obtained, was opened on Sunday week for divine service. Upwards of 3,000*l.* have been subscribed, but this is only one-half of the amount required.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERS, PUTNEY.—The president and council, in order to meet the requirements of this rapidly advancing institution, have resolved to build an extensive range of studies and private rooms for the students, fronting on the river. The designs, prepared by Mr. Thomas Little, are now being carried into execution by Messrs. Burton, the contractors. Additional buildings are also being erected for the use of the Government Commission, under Dr. Lyon Playfair, for the purpose of testing the qualities of the different mines of coals throughout the kingdom.

To learn about OCR and PDF Compression go to ThePaperlessOffice.org